

Holy Ascension Russian Orthodox  
Church, & Bishop's House  
Bishop's House  
Unalaska  
Alaska

HABS No. AK-37 B

HABS  
AK,  
1- UNAK,  
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PHOTOGRAPHS  
WRITTEN HISTORICAL AND DESCRIPTIVE DATA

ADDENDUM  
FOLLOWS

Historic American Buildings Survey  
National Park Service  
Department of the Interior  
Washington, DC 20013-7127

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ARCHITECTURAL DATA FORM

STATE ALASKA	COUNTY	TOWN OR VICINITY UNALASKA
HISTORIC NAME OF STRUCTURE (INCLUDE SOURCE FOR NAME) Holy Ascension Russian Orthodox Church & Bishop's House (NHL)		HABS NO. AK-37 B
SECONDARY OR COMMON NAMES OF STRUCTURE Bishop's House		
COMPLETE ADDRESS (DESCRIBE LOCATION FOR RURAL SITES) UTMs: 03.399000.5970800; In the village of Unalaska on the Island of Unalaska.		
DATE OF CONSTRUCTION (INCLUDE SOURCE) 1882 (NHL)	ARCHITECT(S) (INCLUDE SOURCE) Mooser & Piser, San Francisco, Ca. and Alaska Commercial Company (NHL)	
SIGNIFICANCE (ARCHITECTURAL AND HISTORICAL, INCLUDE ORIGINAL USE OF STRUCTURE) Originally part of a school and residence complex commissioned by Bishop Nestor, development of the school was left to Reverend Alexander Kedrovsky in 1894, a man who brought great energy to the Unalaska parish. The last Orthodox priest lived in the house in 1940-41 when the U.S. military used the buildings for officers quarters. See HABS No. AK-37.		
STYLE (IF APPROPRIATE)		
MATERIAL OF CONSTRUCTION (INCLUDE STRUCTURAL SYSTEMS) wood		
SHAPE AND DIMENSIONS OF STRUCTURE (SKETCHED FLOOR PLANS ON SEPARATE PAGES ARE ACCEPTABLE) 28'x32'; the house has a central section, two-story, 12'10"x33'7½"; wings, east and west, 12'6"x23'11"		
EXTERIOR FEATURES OF NOTE		
INTERIOR FEATURES OF NOTE (DESCRIBE FLOOR PLANS, IF NOT SKETCHED) Central two-story section: contains a foyer and living room on the first floor and a front study and study/library on the second floor; the wings contain a bedroom and anteroom in the west and a dining room and kitchen in the east.		
MAJOR ALTERATIONS AND ADDITIONS WITH DATES School was attached to the west wing; 1930's on, intact and essentially unchanged; 1940's: officer's quarters for U.S. military; post World War II, vacant; 1960, Rev. Basil Nagoski restoring the old school, on the day of dedication burned to the ground, west elevation of House seriously damaged; boarded up. 1976: restoration began.		
PRESENT CONDITION AND USE Exterior restored, monies exhausted from Historic Preservation Funds and a grant from the City of Unalaska. Building is vacant.		
OTHER INFORMATION AS APPROPRIATE Part of Holy Ascension Orthodox Church National Historic Landmark.		
SOURCES OF INFORMATION (INCLUDING LISTING ON NATIONAL REGISTER, STATE REGISTERS, ETC.) NHL; AHRs (UNL005); See Bibliography HABS No. AK-37.		
COMPILER, AFFILIATION Sandra M. Faulkner, Historian, National Park Service		DATE July 29, 1986

Addendum To:  
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HISTORIC AMERICAN BUILDINGS SURVEY  
HOLY ASCENSION RUSSIAN ORTHODOX CHURCH  
BISHOP'S HOUSE

HABS  
AK,  
1- UNAK,  
1- B -

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Location: Between Broadway and Bayview avenues, Unalaska, Alaska.

Significance: Older than the church, the rectory was constructed in 1882 as part of a campaign to improve the housing of Russian Orthodox priests. Bishop Nestor, who initiated the campaign, envisioned this as his base in the western part of his large diocese; he lived in San Francisco.

Description: Located about 150' west of the church, the Bishop's House is a two-story wood-framed building with novelty siding. The two-story central section has a gable roof and hexagonal projecting bays on both front and rear; the bays have pyramidal roofs. On the sides, lower one-story wings have hip roofs. All roofs are covered with wood shingles, and there is a central chimney. The house is ornamented with hoodmolds over the doors and brackets at the cornice.

History: The Bishop's House was constructed by the Alaska Commercial Company in 1882, according to designs by Mooser and Pissis, San Francisco architects commissioned by Bishop Nestor. The original plans show a hipped roof on the central section and rectangular projecting bays in the front and rear; the one-story hip-roofed wings are the same as at present. Entrance was to be through the westernmost bay, but it was built with a center entrance.

Fr. Nicholas Rysev found the house uninhabitable, as it was too expensive to heat (letter of November 1892, Alaskan Russian Church Archives). The school building, constructed in 1882 to the west, was joined to the bishop's house in about 1907. By that time, a number of shed additions had been made on the east side of the house. The house was damaged in the 1960 fire that destroyed the school, and not repaired until restoration work began in 1976. Work on the interior is not yet completed.

Sources: Barbara Smith, "National Register nomination: Holy Ascension Orthodox Church," National Park Service, 1984. The building has been declared a National Historic Landmark and the complete nomination is located in the History Division, National Park Service. The nomination includes copies of the original architectural drawings of the house, as well as historic photographs.

Alaskan Russian Church Archives, Reel 67.

Historian: Alison K. Hoagland, HABS Historian, 1990.